# Neighborhood Networks

*Lifelong Learning From 8 to 80: Creating a Lively Learning Environment for Seniors and Young Adults*

# Lifelong Learning From 8 to 80: Creating a Lively Learning Environment for Seniors and Young Adults

The guides in this series offer information on starting a center, creating programs and identifying center partners, marketing and media outreach, sustainability, funding, and much more. These updated guides feature new contacts, resources, case studies, and helpful information.

Neighborhood Networks is a community-based initiative established by HUD in 1995 that continues to strengthen and grow throughout the United States, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. These community learning centers provide residents of HUD insured and assisted properties with programs, activities, and training that promote economic self-sufficiency.

This guide was published in 2005.

To receive copies of this publication or any others in the series, contact:

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All publications are available from the Neighborhood Networks Web site at
*www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org*.

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# Lifelong Learning From 8 to 80: Creating a Lively Learning Environment for Seniors and Young Adults

*"Different generations, by supporting one another, can strengthen both their societies and themselves. Providing opportunities to and meeting the needs of older persons holds the potential for enhancing the lives of all age groups in society."*

—American Association of Retired Persons

One of every 10 persons is now 60 years old or older, and by 2050, 1 of every 5 persons will be 60 years old or older, according to the Population Division of the United Nations. The increasing percentage of seniors in the United States creates a greater need for services unique to elderly people. Programs designed to help seniors can focus on specific needs and can also provide an opportunity to bridge a generational divide. Neighborhood Networks centers provide an ideal setting to bring young and old together through programs and activities designed to share knowledge between both groups.

Social service programs for seniors are especially necessary in low-income housing communities, and HUD's Neighborhood Networks initiative can help fill this need. Senior programs at Neighborhood Networks centers include production of resident newsletters, computer literacy classes, health and nutrition programs, community gardening, cultural outings, and mentoring projects with local schoolchildren.

Intergenerational programs offer residents an opportunity to share their experiences and help young children and adults understand their own history. These lifelong learning programs keep seniors engaged in the community and provide opportunities for older persons to share their knowledge and experience with other generations. Intergenerational activities provide a forum to establish a link between young children and past cultures and traditions.

This guide describes senior programs at three properties receiving HUD assistance in Portland, Oregon. The properties are Kirkland Union Manor, which has an active Neighborhood Networks center; Marshall Union Manor; and Westmoreland Union Manor. These communities provide insights and experiences that other Neighborhood Networks centers can build on to develop and expand senior programs so that seniors can continue to play active roles in their communities and contribute to their neighborhoods.

The first section of the guide provides information about the Portland Union Manor intergenerational program, describes the barriers that properties face, and shares lessons learned by residents and staff.

The second section provides strategies for developing an intergenerational program.

The third section describes how seniors at the Portland properties contribute to their communities through recreational, educational, and fundraising activities. These activities range from community gardening to raising funds for needy families and producing monthly newsletters. Seniors at the Portland properties are continuing to learn and live independently.

The fourth section offers examples of current senior programs at selected Neighborhood Networks center sites nationwide.

The fifth section lists resources that are available to help Neighborhood Networks centers develop new senior programs or expand existing programs.

This guide focuses on educational and social service programs for seniors and young adults. It does not address health issues, which are an important part of aging. For healthcare information, visit the Neighborhood Networks Web site at www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org and select *Publications*.

# *Background*

The Union Manor intergenerational program grew from two motivations: (1) the desire of local teachers to give students an opportunity to forge connections with older people and (2) property management staff's desire to help increase senior activities. The program encourages lifelong learning between seniors and students and helps form important relationships that may be missing in their families. Almost 75 percent of the students did not have living grandparents or had grandparents residing far from Portland. Likewise, the seniors either did not have grandchildren or had grandchildren who lived far away.

Intergenerational programs are activities that increase cooperation, interaction, and exchange between different generations. These programs help:

- To increase community awareness of issues affecting young and old.

- To foster an appreciation for cultural heritage, traditions, and histories.

- To apply the strengths of one generation to meet the needs of another.

## Description of the Program

In 1998 the resident service coordinator at Kirkland Union Manor—a HUD assisted property in Portland, Oregon, with 320 seniors and an active Neighborhood Networks center—was searching for opportunities to engage seniors who isolated themselves in their apartments. At the same time, two teachers at Catlin Gabel, a private school in Portland, were developing an intergenerational project to help expand the written and social skills of their fourth-grade students through interactive learning activities with older adults. The Catlin Gabel teachers contacted Kirkland Union Manor to explore potential opportunities to connect students and seniors

through the class's intergenerational program. The objectives of the teachers and the resident service coordinators matched and they began to plan a program for students and residents to learn from one another through educational activities.

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**Three Properties/One Program**

Three HUD assisted apartment complexes housing senior residents in Portland, Oregon, participate in an intergenerational program with a nearby private school. The Union Manor properties share a management company and staff.

- Kirkland Union Manor (320 senior residents).

- Marshall Union Manor (250 senior residents).

- Westmoreland Union Manor (350 senior residents).

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The two Catlin Gabel fourth-grade teachers who contacted the Union Manor properties decided that all 45 of their students would participate in the program as part of their classroom activities. The resident service coordinator for the Union Manor properties (Marshall Union Manor and Kirkland Union Manor) recruited senior volunteers to participate in monthly educational activities with the students.

During a monthly resident council meeting, the resident service coordinator explained the program to residents at Marshall Union Manor and Kirkland Union Manor and asked for volunteers. Thirty seniors volunteered at Marshall and 15 seniors volunteered at Kirkland.

The Union Manor resident service coordinator and the two teachers met to pair each student with one participating senior to encourage a personal relationship. The coordinator and teachers matched residents with students who had similar interests, hobbies, personalities, and energy levels.

Before the first visit, teachers prepared the students by asking them what they wanted to learn about the resident with whom they would be matched. Students also prepared an autobiography to help the seniors get to know them.

Once every month during the school year, the Catlin Gabel students traveled with their two teachers and parents by schoolbus to the Union Manor properties to participate in structured activities, which typically lasted about 1½ hours. Although most activities took place in the property community rooms, a few events were held at the school. Students and seniors often maintained contact beyond the scheduled sessions through e-mail, calls, and visits to the students' homes.

The intergenerational program began when the students developed senior biographies, an activity that continued throughout the year. Students prepared questions to interview residents about their lives. Residents responded to the interviews by sharing their life stories and describing interests they had in common with the students. Students used this information to write histories that included photographs they had taken of the residents. Students bound the biographies and presented them to their senior friends at the end of the school year. The activity provided students with a sense of heritage and offered seniors a chance to share what life was like and how much had changed since they were in fourth grade.

> "It has been more than we possibly could have imagined. The kids have developed a close, unique relationship with senior friends."
>
> —Jari Highsmith, fourth-grade teacher at Catlin Gabel

Residents used part of their monthly meeting times to explore mutual hobbies. For example, one senior took his student partner to the onsite community garden to talk about their shared love of gardening. The family of another student invited his senior partner to attend a Portland Trail Blazers basketball game with the family.

Participation by parents has helped expand the scope of activities. Parents help chaperone weekly visits and plan special events. During the winter holidays, 23 parents organized a dinner at Catlin Gabel followed by a musical show the students had prepared for the residents. A schoolbus drove seniors to Catlin Gabel for the musical.

Kirkland Union Manor has a history of intergenerational programs. Two years before the Catlin Gabel partnership, a teacher at Marshall High School in Portland contacted the Kirkland Union Manor administrator to develop a computer basics class for seniors taught by Marshall High freshmen and sophomores. The property administrator drove participants in the residents' van to the school computer lab. Many of the students continued their relationships with the seniors after the class ended by visiting Kirkland Union Manor and participating in informal recreational community room activities such as billiards.

> "It was hard to sell some of the residents at first. They would rather have stayed in their apartments. Now all they can talk about is 'their grandchildren.' It's amazing! A lot of the seniors start getting excited days before the scheduled visit, anticipating the visit with their new friends. Residents are now banging on the door, asking if they can have a student next year."
>
> —Cyndy Haftorson, resident service coordinator

## Problems Solved

The program expanded interactive opportunities for seniors at the Portland properties and formed relationships between generations. Many residents had developed daily routines with limited activities and minimal personal contact, contributing to deteriorating mental and physical health. The intergenerational program offered seniors an opportunity to expand their activities and personal contacts as they taught and learned from students.

The program helped the children and seniors become comfortable discussing disability issues. The seniors' scooters and wheelchairs fascinated the students. As the seniors described their experiences during the monthly meetings, students

learned that many people with physical challenges continue to pursue active lifestyles. Some residents allowed the students to ride their scooters. One senior allowed a student to use the mechanical device that carries her from her wheelchair to her bed.

## Program Challenges

The intergenerational program at the Union Manor properties was developed with minimal resources. Coordinators faced a few challenges in encouraging seniors to participate in something new and in gaining educational institution approval. The following are some of the challenges along with suggestions to help address them.

**Educational system approvals.** Students' attendance in a new program that operates off school grounds requires approval from both the school system and the parents. New program administrators should prepare for approval time and work closely with teachers while encouraging parents to participate in the program. Catlin Gabel required a plan of supervision with adequate staff and parents since the children were traveling to a private residence. The commitment of the two teachers and parent volunteers who agreed to accompany children to the senior properties helped overcome the school's administrative concerns.

**Program structure versus spontaneity.** The Catlin Gabel/Union Manor program included both structured time and free time for students to participate in individual activities with seniors. A previous student/senior pairing with middle school students at another Union Manor property did not include any free time for the seniors and students to learn about one another. Participants did not develop as strong a relationship in the overly structured program.

**Addressing senior routines.** Seniors who have developed strict daily routines may avoid any change that could disrupt their habits. Many would rather stay with a successful routine than chance the possibility of failure by trying something new. The Union Manor staff overcame this

fear by developing a program with some structure that provided a new routine and allowed students and seniors to progress at their own pace on projects such as the senior biography.

**Continuity.** Since the intergenerational program relies on the relationship between the student/senior pair, seniors or students who cannot regularly participate in the program or who leave the program midway limit opportunities for their partner. To avoid continuity problems, Kirkland Union Manor staff identified additional residents to serve as substitutes when needed.

**Mismatching of student and senior pair.** Random matching of seniors and students can result in personality conflicts. To help overcome this barrier, Union Manor staff and Catlin Gabel teachers reviewed resident and student interests and carefully planned the matches. Coordinators who are unfamiliar with participants' interests may consider interviewing participants about their preferences.

## Lessons Learned

The Union Manor intergenerational program offered several lessons that may benefit Neighborhood Networks centers when planning similar programs with seniors and youth. The following are some key lessons that may help centers develop effective intergenerational programs.

**Consistency counts.** It was important to establish a consistent time and place for the program. At Kirkland Union Manor, this consistency provided participating seniors with a new routine that made it easy for them to remember when and where to go. The consistent time and place also allowed the Catlin Gabel teachers to schedule students' time and helped prepare students for their time with the seniors.

**Personalize the program by matching students and seniors.** Kirkland Union Manor staff met with teachers at Catlin Gabel to link one senior with one student. This helped to develop personal relationships between students and se-

niors. Matching based on mutual interests was critical to the success of this program.

**Plan a specific activity or theme for each visit.** This gives the participants a project to work on together and an opportunity to build a relationship around a common project or activity. The Kirkland Union Manor resident service coordinator held educational sessions that included a visit from a veterinarian to discuss the bonding between animals and older adults with physical challenges. Students interviewed and photographed seniors during an ongoing senior biography project.

**Begin with an icebreaker.** This allows participants to share information about themselves and also learn about others in a meaningful way. During the first session at Marshall Union Manor, students brought items that interested them, such as a book on horses, or discussed their interests with the seniors. Seniors learned about the students as they discussed their hobbies.

**Publicize the results.** Success stories and photographs published in the local newspaper helped attract community attention and motivate additional seniors and students to participate.

# *Starting Your Own Intergenerational Program*

Steps to develop an intergenerational program for seniors will vary depending on local goals and resources. Effective planning and ongoing communication between the two groups, teachers and center staff, are staples of any program. Generations United, a national coalition working to promote intergenerational policy, programs, and issues, recommends the following steps to start an intergenerational program for seniors. When applicable, examples from Kirkland Union Manor are included. These steps apply to both intergenerational programs and other social service programs that serve seniors only.

**Conduct a needs assessment or survey of seniors.** The assessment can be formal or informal. The Kirkland Union Manor resident service coordinator learned about senior interests and needs through daily interactions with residents and relied on this knowledge to design the intergenerational program. Other centers may need a more formal tool, such as a survey or questionnaire for seniors to identify interest areas and to indicate willingness to participate in requested activities.

**Build a partnership with area schools and youth organizations.** Work with one or two organizations, such as the local Parent Teacher Association (see the national PTA Web site at www.pta.org). Contact local schools, childcare agencies, youth centers, or youth organizations (Boy Scouts, Camp Fire Girls, etc.). Identify one or two teachers or youth center leaders to coordinate the program and serve as a liaison with parents. Since a local private school approached Kirkland Union Manor, the senior property did not have to conduct this outreach. Other centers may need to research and contact local organizations to begin a program.

**Establish measurable goals and objectives.** In order to have a successful program, the goals and objectives of the senior center and the youth program should be similar. Kirkland Union

Manor's staff met with two Catlin Gabel fourth-grade teachers to identify shared goals, determine an activity site, and outline a schedule of activities. The teachers' goals were to increase students' interactions with older adults and to expand written and social skills. Union Manor staff's goals were to develop additional interactive events and expand social and learning opportunities for seniors.

**Develop a monitoring and evaluation plan.** Continuous oversight and periodic review of the program help to identify what parts of the program are working and what needs to be revised. The evaluation should assess whether goals and objectives are met. For example, if one goal is for participants to remain in the program for the entire school year, the evaluation plan would determine the length of time that participants attended planned events. All students and seniors in the Union Manor program remained in the program during the school year, which is an indication that participants' interests were met and the program was successful.

**Begin with a clear and realistic program design and budget.** Advance planning of activities and early identification of available resources reduce last-minute attempts to establish and run a program. Start early to obtain parental permission, achieve senior consensus, and find funds for events. Find a consistent place and time for activities to help encourage regular attendance by seniors and students. The Catlin Gabel teachers started planning the program early in the school year and established contact with Union Manor to discuss the activity. Both the Union Manor property management staff and the school provided funds for special events, including a senior field trip to the school musical and student participation in a seniors' dinner. The Union Manor seniors also raised their own funds through rummage sales, bake sales, and the sale of holiday crafts, such as Christmas

wreaths and candles, to help pay for activities with the students.

**Ensure that transportation is available.** Students and seniors participating in the program may require transportation to attend activities. Existing modes of transportation, such as a schoolbus or resident van, can help increase the level of participation. Centers without vehicles may consider a partnership with a public transportation company, local community center, or faith-based organization to provide transportation. The Catlin Gabel students traveled by schoolbus to the senior properties and seniors used the schoolbus to visit the school. Kirkland Union Manor property management staff purchased a van for residents' use.

**Recruit, select, and match participants.** Union Manor staff recruited senior participants by describing the program during the monthly resident council meeting, advertising the program in *The Manor News* (a resident newsletter), and posting signup sheets in building elevators. Senior volunteers at Kirkland met with the Union Manor staff to learn more about the program and to indicate special requests in student/senior matching. All students participated as part of their classroom activities. The Union Manor staff and Catlin Gabel teachers matched each student with one senior based on participant interests, hobbies, and personalities.

**Prepare and train staff and participants.** Preparation and training will ensure that staff and participants achieve lifelong learning goals. Generations United, a national coalition that helps bridge generation gaps, has online intergenerational resources and programs to help prepare staff and participants. Visit the Generations United Web site at www.gu.org. The Union Manor resident service coordinator and the Catlin Gabel teachers met with the seniors and students before the program began to explain the program and answer questions.

**Coordinate and supervise activities.** Intergenerational program coordinators should work closely with one another to facilitate activities. Catlin Gabel teachers, parent chaperones, and the Union Manor service coordinator worked together to supervise students during the monthly events at the senior properties.

**Recognize and support participants.** Periodic activities that recognize volunteer efforts encourage participants to continue in the program. Catlin Gabel students, their teachers, and their parents held a winter holiday dinner and musical to express appreciation for the senior participants. In turn, seniors hosted an end-of-the-school-year barbecue for the students. Both activities celebrated the time and effort that the students and the seniors had invested in the program.

# *Beyond Intergenerational Activities*

As with other social service programs, senior services work best when they combine a number of different approaches to improving the quality of life for seniors and helping them live independently. Intergenerational activities offer one avenue for seniors to become involved in the community. At the Portland properties, seniors also help raise funds, contribute to local charities, work in onsite gardens, and participate in English as a Second Language (ESL) and computer classes at the Kirkland Union Manor Neighborhood Networks Center.

## Do-It-Yourself Fundraising

To help finance senior programs and contribute to their community, senior residents at Kirkland Union Manor participate in a range of fundraising activities. They coordinate a communitywide rummage sale twice a year at the property. Friends, family, and the seniors donate clothes, furniture, and other household items. A resident committee organizes the sale, places an advertisement in the newspaper, and designs flyers that are posted around the neighborhood and in the building. All proceeds are given to the resident council to be used for senior activities as needed.

Senior resident clubs sponsor additional activities to help community members in need. At Christmas, resident clubs provide clothing for children, food boxes, and other household items families need. Resident clubs also collect eyeglasses for local nonprofit agencies and collect aluminum flip tops from soft drink cans to support the Ronald McDonald House.

## Recreation Through Resident Gardens

In addition to contributing funds, residents at the Union Manor properties enhance their communities through recreational activities such as gardening. Gardening increases exercise opportunities for the seniors, provides inexpensive

meal supplements, and contributes to the overall nutritional health of the seniors and their neighbors. About 100 residents at the 3 Union Manor properties grow flowers and vegetables on assigned garden plots provided by the property managers. Each garden has 25 to 30 individual plots where tenants grow either vegetables or flowers for their use. The seniors purchase the seeds and plant, water, and maintain their spaces. Each spring the property management firm tills the soil before planting begins.

Resident garden committees work with the property management to adopt garden use rules at each site. The committees also raise funds as needed for tools and supplies, including a tool shed at Westmoreland Union Manor. In continuous use for 20 years, the Westmoreland garden has nine plots with raised beds to accommodate residents in wheelchairs.

## Neighborhood Networks Center Brings Seniors Online

When not weeding their garden plots, seniors at Kirkland Union Manor can go online at the computer lab located next to the property's community room. Seniors use the four computers to access the Internet and produce *The Manor News,* a monthly newsletter for residents. The newsletter highlights resident meetings, trips, activities, and news about the property and the community.

By participating in newsletter production, seniors learn new technology skills, increase interaction with other seniors, and develop a recognizable product. Approximately 10 to 15 seniors help develop, collate, and distribute the newsletter, which serves as an important communication tool among residents.

Property management staff modified the computer lab equipment to meet senior needs. Computer tables were elevated to accommodate wheelchairs, computer keyboards were outfitted

with large-letter stickers, and a magnifying apparatus was attached to the monitors. The property management staff used administrative funds to pay for the center, the computers, and all required modifications.

## Learning English as a Second Language (ESL)

Union Manor residents reflect the increasingly international flavor of the United States. Many of the newest arrivals need help learning English and adapting to their new culture. About 25 percent of the residents at Kirkland Union Manor are Korean and about 40 percent are Russian.

The management company employs two part-time translators to help Korean and Russian residents. Residents can work with the translators individually or participate in ESL classes that are held twice a week in the community room.

For more information about senior programs at the Union Manor properties in Portland, contact:

Cyndy Haftorson
Resident Service Coordinator
Kirkland Union Manor
**Phone:** (503) 788–0882
**E-mail:** c.haftorson@worldnet.att.net

# Senior Activities at Neighborhood Networks Centers

The Portland programs can serve as resources to help other Neighborhood Networks centers develop programs in which seniors actively contribute to their communities. From intergenerational activities where Kirkland Union Manor and Marshall Union Manor seniors taught and learned from young students, to community service activities where residents raised funds for local charities and for their own activities, seniors' participation in social service programs highlights the critical roles they play in their neighborhoods.

Other Neighborhood Networks centers also serve as good resources for centers that are developing or expanding social service programs for seniors. Some programs simply provide computer classes for seniors while others rely on seniors to play leadership roles to develop programs, such as the "I'm OK" program in Washington State, where residents systematically check to ensure that neighbors arrive home safely. Although the programs vary, all of them strive to address senior needs and allow seniors to contribute to their communities.

Neighborhood Networks centers are encouraged to contact other centers that are conducting similar programs, such as those outlined below, to share experiences and compare lessons. Centers that are developing new programs can use the following as resources to learn how to start and build a social service program for seniors.

## Westgate Terrace Apartments Learning Center, Longview, Washington

The Westgate Terrace Neighborhood Networks Center serves both the 101-unit Westgate Terrace Apartments and the 52-unit Parkland Terrace Apartments across the street. Many of the seniors are active in the following activities:

- Daily 5-hour computer classes with volunteer instructors from the nearby Lower Columbia College. Center participants can practice what they learn during computer lab sessions.

- Publishing a monthly center newsletter for all residents. This includes researching, writing, and designing articles on special events and resident activities.

- Building and personal safety programs. Residents implemented a fire monitor program and an "I'm OK" system, in which each person checks on another resident daily and residents place stickers on their doors to alert others that they have arrived home safely at night.

**Contact:** Vera Morrow
**Phone:** (360) 578–1585
**E-mail:** fbm@pacifier.com

## Lakeland Wesley Village Neighborhood Networks Center, Brenton, Kentucky

The 200 senior residents at Lakeland Wesley Village can exercise their minds, their bodies, and their creativity through programs that range from computer literacy to musicals.

**Online activities.** Currently, 10 to 15 high school students from the technical department of Marshall County High School help residents use the Internet and learn how to set up their own Web site. The students also help residents publish a monthly newsletter and calendar.

**Wellness program.** The management company finances a wellness program that addresses the physical, spiritual, emotional, and psychological needs of senior residents. Program services

include daily exercise programs, onsite house-keeping, medication reminders, and the Alert and Alive Drive program. A partnership with Murray State University provided a video exercise program through a student internship. The wellness program includes a variety of social activities each week, including coffee and doughnut Fridays, movie night, game night, dances, and special events.

**Resident association.** Seniors participate in a volunteer Resident Association Board composed of 33 percent of Lakeland Wesley Village residents. The association establishes and changes community bylaws, coordinates fundraising activities such as bake sales, and organizes holiday bazaars. The association also plans holiday activities, including potluck meals, and arranges crafts, outings, entertainment, and other activities. Partnerships with local churches and Boy Scout troops provide additional social activities for the residents.

**Musically minded.** Twenty to 30 residents are involved in a touring band called the Village Panhandlers. Playing kitchen utensils and accompanied by a piano, the self-funded band travels up to 50 miles to play at nursing homes, retirement homes, and awards functions. The Lakeland Wesley Village management company provides transportation for the band.

**Contact:** Kendra Capps
**Phone:** (502) 354–8888
**E-mail:** lwvi@ldd.net

# Arizona Retirement Home of Scottsdale, Scottsdale, Arizona

Arizona Retirement Home seniors participated in an intergenerational mentoring program using technology called K through GRAY Pueblo.

**K through GRAY Pueblo mentoring program.** Through a partnership with the gerontology department of Phoenix College, about 10 seniors participated in a pilot program with an elementary school to mentor at-risk children through the Internet. Volunteers from the college taught the seniors how to help the children

online. The major goal of the program was to prevent the children from dropping out of school. In addition to providing academic mentoring, the periodic program helps forge relationships between generations.

**Technology and daily activities.** The Neighborhood Networks center offers additional programs to senior residents that include weekly current event discussions and online research. Residents also use the center's technology to create song sheets for Christmas caroling during the holidays.

**Contact:** Janie Finan
**Phone:** (602) 947–3756
**E-mail:** janie@aztec.asu.edu

# Operation P.E.A.C.E. Reach Out Center, Atlanta, Georgia

The property's active senior population participates in various programs, including a daily "calling tree" in which residents contact one another about special needs; water aerobics; community gardening; trips to the symphony, plays, and movies; and a citizens' program that sponsors luncheons. Seniors comprise about 20 percent of the 2,800 residents in the 733-unit apartment complex.

**Exercise programs.** Seniors participate in exercise activities that include a weekly water aerobics program and weekly walks. A VISTA volunteer helps coordinate the water aerobics held at the athletic club at Georgia Baptist Hospital. Walks are organized at least once a week; they include nature walks through botanical gardens along with walks around the neighborhood, and to the local mall.

**Neighborhood garden.** Through its partnership with Georgia State University, AmeriCorps sent volunteers, fertilizer, tools, and services to help begin a garden through a Break Ground for Garden project. The Village of Bedford Pines management company donated a plot within walking distance of the center. After the initial AmeriCorps aid, the seniors continued to weed, garden, water, and harvest on their own.

**Cultural and civic activities.** A volunteer intern from the Georgia State University School of Social Work organizes monthly trips for seniors to the symphony, plays, and movies. Through its Community Partnership Program, a citizens' program holds monthly luncheons with catering donated by a local restaurant or catering service and space donated by the nearby Ford Street Baptist Church.

**Contact:** Ihsan Muhammad
**Phone:** (404) 892–8004
**E-mail:** riceandpeas@hotmail.com

## Plough Towers Community Technology Center, Memphis, Tennessee

Seventeen seniors and disabled residents use the center's four computers for 6 to 8 hours a day. A tutor teaches computer applications 20 hours a week and works with the students individually.

**Online classes.** The seniors learn basic computer skills such as how to surf the Internet, send and receive e-mail, create personal homepages for the World Wide Web, and use the word processor to create invitations, certificates, and greeting cards.

**Online language needs.** A large number of residents speak Russian. The computer tutor has downloaded software so the residents can receive video news with Russian text from the BBC.

**Contact:** Bernard Danzig
**Phone:** (901) 767–1910
**E-mail:** bdanzig@juno.com
**Web site:** www.mecca.org/~grothman/plough

# *Resources for Developing Social Service Programs for Seniors*

A number of organizations can help Neighbor-hood Networks centers develop and expand social service programs for seniors. These organizations can provide information, technical assistance, and financial resources to help develop or expand senior programs.

## Information and Technical Assistance

**American Association of Retired Persons (AARP).** AARP is a national membership organization for people 50 years of age or older. Its primary functions are legislative advocacy, research, information, and community services. AARP has a wealth of publications and audio-visual materials that can be ordered from its publication catalog. Local AARP offices also may provide program ideas and materials.

**Address:** 601 E Street NW
Washington, DC 20049
**Phone:** (800) 424–3410
**Web site:** www.aarp.org

**Generations United.** Generations United is a national coalition that helps bridge generation gaps through online intergenerational resources and programs. The Washington, DC-based organization works with Generations United coalitions across the country to link individuals of different generations with the organizations that represent them.

**Address:** 440 First Street NW, Suite 310
Washington, DC 20001–2085
**Phone:** (202) 662–4283
**E-mail:** gu@cwla.org
**Web site:** www.gu.org

**Green Thumb Senior Employment Program.** This program provides training, employment, and community service opportunities to almost 100,000 seniors nationwide. Low-income seniors contribute community service to non-profit and public organizations, for which they earn a modest income that helps many of them remain independent of public assistance and stay productive.

**Address:** 2000 North 14th Street, Suite 800
Arlington, VA 22201
**Phone:** (703) 522–7272
**Web site:** www.greenthumb.org

**National Association of Area Agencies on Aging.** The organization provides communications, training, and technical assistance to educate and advocate about aging issues. The Web site links to local Area Agencies on Aging offices that can provide technical assistance and funding.

**Address:** 927 15th Street NW, Sixth Floor
Washington, DC 20005
**Phone:** (202) 296–8130
**Web site:** www.n4a.org

**National Council on Aging (NCOA).** NCOA is a membership organization of community-based groups committed to aging issues. The organization provides educational programs on aging, participates in legislative advocacy, provides information about funding sources, and conducts research on aging issues.

**Address:** 409 Third Street SW
Washington, DC 20024
**Phone:** (202) 479–1200
**E-mail:** info@ncoa.org
**Web site:** www.ncoa.org

**National Gardening Association.** The National Gardening Association is a nonprofit organization that produces a gardening magazine, sponsors science education programs that include projects linking students with master gardeners, and conducts garden-related research.

**Address:** 180 Flynn Avenue
Burlington, VT 05401
**Phone:** (802) 863–1308
**Web site:** assoc.garden.org

# Financial Information

**Administration on Aging (AoA)—U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.** This government organization provides funding to and information about senior programs. The office has a resource directory for seniors that contains contact data on organizations providing information and other resources regarding the needs of older people.

**Address:** 330 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20201
**Phone:** (202) 619–7501
**E-mail:** aoainfo@aoa.gov
**Web site:** www.aoa.dhhs.gov

**The Commonwealth Fund.** The Commonwealth Fund's primary goal is to help Americans live healthy, productive lives and to assist targeted groups with serious or neglected problems. Its priorities include advancing the well-being of the elderly.

**Address:** One East 75th Street
New York, NY 10021–2692
**Phone:** (212) 606–3800
**Web site:** www.cmwf.org

**The Pew Charitable Trusts.** Pew makes funds available to nonprofit organizations for programs that encourage individual achievement, cross-disciplinary problem solving, and innovative approaches to meeting changing needs. The Trusts' Health and Human Services program is designed to promote the health and well-being of Americans and to strengthen disadvantaged communities.

**Address:** 2005 Market Street, Suite 1700
Philadelphia, PA 19103–7077
**Phone:** (215) 575–9050
**Web site:** www.pewtrusts.com

# Neighborhood Networks Information

For more information about Neighborhood Networks, visit the Neighborhood Networks Web site at *www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org* or contact the Neighborhood Networks information center toll-free at (888) 312–2743, or TTY at (800) 483–2209. The Web site contains valuable information for centers, including:

**HUD NN Coordinators**
Neighborhood Networks Coordinators listing.

**Center Database**
Information about operational centers and those in planning. Neighborhood Networks centers across the U.S. listed geographically by state.

**Property Database**
Information about Neighborhood Networks properties listed geographically by state.

**Resources Database**
Information about funding, technical assistance, publications, and Web site resources.

**News Database**
Articles, press releases, success stories, and grand openings relevant to Neighborhood Networks.

**List of Conferences**
Calendar of conferences and training events.

**List of Resident Associations**
List of Neighborhood Networks properties with active resident associations.

**Neighborhood Networks Consortia**
List of Neighborhood Networks consortia.

**Senior Properties**
List of senior properties with operational Neighborhood Networks centers.

**Online Networking**
Talk with Neighborhood Networks staff and stakeholders via online networking.

**Publications**

- **Fact sheets.** Fact sheets are one-page summaries of various topics relevant to the operations of Neighborhood Network centers. Fact sheets that are currently available include an overview of the initiative, health information, childcare, transportation, seniors, and community improvements at Neighborhood Networks centers.

- *Network News* (current and past issues). A semiannual newsletter that highlights national achievements for a wide audience, including partners and the public.

- *NNewsline* (current and past issues). A semiannual newsletter that highlights topics of interest to Neighborhood Networks centers and coordinators.